

REMARKS

Please reconsider the application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Applicant thanks the Examiner for carefully considering this application.

Disposition of Claims

Claims 1-10 are pending in this application. Claim 1 is independent. The remaining claims depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 1.

Amendments to the Claims

Claim 1 is amended in the current reply to recite “a switching device configured to selectively connect the electrical machine to one of the energy supply battery and the energy storage device, the switching device being configured to connect the electrical machine to the energy storage device during overexcitation of the electrical machine,” and that the overexcitation is caused by at least braking. Support for these amendments may be found, for example, in paragraph [0064] on page 10 of the originally filed specification. Other amendments to claim 1 removed portions of the preamble or were made to be consistent with the recited features regarding the switching device. No new matter has been added by these amendments.

Claims 2-5 and 7 were amended for form and to be consistent with amended claim 1. No new matter has been added by these amendments.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,420,793 (“Gale”). Claim 1 has been amended to clarify the claimed invention. To the

extent the Examiner maintains the rejection of claim 1 and dependent claim 8, the rejection is respectfully traversed.

As amended, claim 1 recites “a device for supplying to the network energy produced by overexcitation of the electrical machine caused by at least braking.” Such an arrangement allows for “recuperative braking,” in which braking energy is recovered by converting it to electrical power (page 11, para. [0065]). Gale neither shows nor suggests such a feature.

Gale discloses a method for energizing a combined alternator/starter to start a vehicle (Abstract). Throughout the disclosure, Gale is silent on overexcitation of the electrical machine during braking of the vehicle, as well as the configuration of the switching device to selectively connect the electrical machine to the energy supply battery and the energy storage device during such overexcitation.

In view of the above, Gale neither shows nor suggests the claimed invention as recited in claim 1. Thus, claim 1 is patentable over Gale. By virtue of its dependence, claim 8 is patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 2-5, 9, and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Gale in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,446,365 (“Nomura”). Claims 6 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Gale in view of JP-10184506 (“JP ‘506”). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As discussed above with respect to amended claim 1, Gale neither shows nor suggests the claimed invention. Nomura and JP '506 do not provide that which Gale lacks with respect to claim 1. Specifically, both Nomura and JP '506 are silent with respect to overexcitation of the electrical machine during braking of the vehicle. In view of this silence, Gale, Nomura, and JP '506, whether considered separately or in combination, neither show nor suggest the claimed invention as recited in claim 1. Thus, claim 1 is patentable over Gale, Nomura, and JP '506. By virtue of their dependence, claims 2-7, 9, and 10 are patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Accordingly, withdrawal of these rejections is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

Applicant believes this reply is fully responsive to all outstanding issues and places this application in condition for allowance. If this belief is incorrect, or other issues arise, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned or his associates at the telephone number listed below. Please apply any charges not covered, or any credits, to Deposit Account 50-0591, Reference 17170/002001.

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Respectfully submitted,

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